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ON-FILE NSC RELEASE INSTRUCTIONS
APPLY

1972 OCT 28 AM 9 27

TOP SECRET 281120Z OCT 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0239 IMMEDIATE
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER
REF: WHS 2302

SECTION 1 OF 2

1. IN MEETING WITH THIEU THIS MORNING I REPORTED ON STATUS OF PROJECT ENHANCE PLUS AND INFORMED HIM THAT WE ARE NOW AIMING ON COMPLETION DATE OF NOVEMBER 20. I NOTED THAT, AS HE HAD BEEN INFORMED, THIS WILL PROVIDE A LARGE AMOUNT OF EQUIPMENT INCLUDING PLANES, TANKS, ARTILLERY, TRUCKS AND A WIDE VARIETY OF OTHER EQUIPMENT WHICH IS AN ADDITION TO PROJECT ENHANCE AS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED. THE PURPOSE, AS HE KNEW, IS TO BRING UP THE INVENTORY OF EQUIPMENT TO ITS MAXIMUM SO THAT THE GVN WILL HAVE THE LARGEST POSSIBLE BASE FOR REPLACEMENT IN ANTICIPATION THAT A CEASEFIRE MAY TAKE PLACE AT ABOUT THAT TIME.

MORI/CDF C05081070

2. I REFERRED TO YOUR THURSDAY MORNING PRESS CONFERENCE AND SAID THAT YOU HAD ENDEAVORED TO FOLLOW THE GENERAL LINE OF THE STATEMENT WHICH HE AND I HAD DISCUSSED ON THURSDAY MORNING (SAIGON TIME. PART OF WHAT HAD BEEN SAID WAS AIMED AT PREVENTING HIM AND THE GVN FROM BEING SINGLED OUT AS A SOLE OBSTACLE TO PEACE; THAT AS BOTH YOU AND I HAD MENTIONED PREVIOUSLY - AND AS HE IS CERTAINLY AWARE - SHOULD THIS OCCUR IT WOULD POSE THE GREATEST OF RISKS TO OUR CONTINUING ABILITY TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO HIM AND TO THE GVN. THUS PRESS REPORTS COMING FROM THE UNITED STATES ON YOUR PRESS BRIEFING MUST BE READ IN THAT CONTEXT.

3. THIEU REPLIED THAT SOME OF THE STATEMENTS AS REPORTED WERE CONSIDERED BY PEOPLE HERE AS BEING AMBIGUOUS. I REPLIED THAT THIS HAD BEEN DONE PURPOSELY IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE THE IMPRESSION OF DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN US.

4. I SAID THAT I HAD, THEREFORE, BEEN GREATLY DISTURBED BY REPORTS WHICH HAVE COME TO ME OF SOME STATEMENTS WHICH ARE PURPORTED TO HAVE EMANATED FROM THE PALACE OR GVN OFFICIALS. WHATEVER THE DIFFERENCES OR DISAGREEMENTS THERE MAY BE BETWEEN US THEY SHOULD NOT BECOME PUBLIC PROPERTY AT THIS HIGHLY CRITICAL PERIOD.

5. WE HAD BEEN TOLD BY A REUTERS CORRESPONDENT THAT MR. NHA HAD

INFORMED HIM THAT IN SPEAKING TO THE MEETING AT THE PALACE YESTERDAY, YOU HAD PROPOSED AN ELECTORAL COMMISSION TO BE ELECTED BY REFERENDUM CONDUCTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS WITH THE SUBSEQUENT FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT WHOSE MEMBERSHIP WOULD CONFORM TO THE PROPORTION OF THE VOTE IN THE REFERENDUM. TO A NEW YORK TIMES CORRESPONDENT MR. NHA HAD SAID THIS IS A "COUNTER-PROPOSAL" WHICH WAS A "MODIFICATION OF OUR JANUARY PROPOSAL", THAT YOUR SPEECH AMOUNTS TO A COUNTER-PROPOSAL BY THE GVN AND THAT "WE ARE BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THE MONTH." WHEN ASKED IF THIS MEANT THAT ALL NEGOTIATIONS SINCE OCTOBER 8 WERE WIPED OUT, HE REPORTED THAT MR. NHA HAD REPLIED "YES".

6. I SAID THAT STATEMENTS OF THIS KIND, OF COURSE, WILL BE INTERPRETED BY YOUR CRITICS AND OURS AND ALL THOSE WHO WISH US ILL AS EVIDENCE OF AN OPEN BREAK BETWEEN US.

7. I SAID THAT YOU ARE FULLY AWARE OF HIS (THIEU'S) AND THE GVN'S VIEWS AND THAT, AS I HAD ALREADY ASSURED HIM, YOU WILL DO YOUR UTMOST TO GET THEM ACCEPTED BY THE OTHER SIDE; AS YOU HAD MENTIONED YESTERDAY, YOU ARE PREPARED TO STAY AS LONG AS NECESSARY AT THE NEXT ROUND OF MEETINGS IN ORDER TO COME TO A CONCLUSION. EFFORTS NOW TO TRY TO DEVELOP ALTERNATE PROPOSALS CAN ONLY HAVE THE CONSEQUENCE OF FORCING A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN US AND CAN ONLY SERVE HANOI'S PURPOSE AND THAT OF OUR CRITICS. WE MUST TRY TO WORK WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PRESENT PROPOSAL AND TRY TO SECURE THE CHANGES HE HAD REQUESTED. AS GOOD FRIENDS AND ALLIES, WE SHOULD PRESENT A SOLID FRONT TO THE PUBLIC AND THE ENEMY AND ARGUE OUT OUR DIFFERENCES PRIVATELY AMONG OURSELVES.

8. DRAWING ON REFTEL, I SAID THAT YOU PROPOSED TO MEET WITH THE OTHER SIDE THE LATTER PART OF NEXT WEEK AND WOULD PLAN TO COME TO SAIGON THE FOLLOWING WEEK TO REPORT TO THIEU.

9. I SUGGESTED THAT THIEU GIVE ME THE WORDING THEY WOULD SUGGEST FOR THE POINTS ON WHICH WE HAVE DIFFERENCES. I WOULD THEN FORWARD THEM TO YOU FOR YOUR USE AT THE NEXT MEETING. I NOTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THEIR CONCERN ABOUT THE PHRASE "ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE" IN ENGLISH AND SAID THAT AMBASSADOR PHUONG HAD INFORMED ME YESTERDAY THAT THE VIETNAMESE WORD TRANSLATED INTO "GOVERNMENT"; IF THIS WERE TRUE IT WOULD NEED TO BE STRAIGHTENED OUT. (OUR OWN TRANSLATORS HAVE CONFIRMED THIS.) IN RESPECT TO THE OTHER MAIN POINTS, I.E., OBSERVANCE OF THE DMZ AND TROOP WITHDRAWAL WE WOULD SEE WHAT WE COULD DO.

10. THIEU SAID THAT IT WAS INDEED TRUE THAT IN THE VIETNAMESE TEXT THE LANGUAGE OF ARTICLE 9 F CALLED FOR THE CREATION OF A "GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE" AND THIS WAS THE CAUSE FOR GREAT APPREHENSION AMONG THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE PEOPLE. SUSPICIONS WERE AROUSED ALSO BY HANOI'S REFERENCE TO THE THREE INDOCHINESE COUNTRIES. HE SAID THERE WERE A NUMBER OF OTHER INSTANCES OF DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THE VIETNAMESE AND ENGLISH VERSIONS. IN THIS CONNECTION IT SEEMS PROBABLE ALSO THAT THIEU'S ATTITUDE IS INFLUENCED BY THE INTELLIGENCE HE IS RECEIVING ON THE ENEMY'S INTENTIONS AND BY THE GUIDANCE WHICH HANOI AND THE NLF ARE PROVIDING TO THEIR CADRE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. ON 25 OCTOBER, PROVINCE LEVEL CADRE WERE TOLD THAT THE ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE OF THE VC HAS NOT BEEN ATTAINED AND "THE PUPPET GOVERN-

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T O P S E C R E T 231120Z OCT 72 VIA CAS CHANNELS (BUNKER)
SECTION TWO OF TWO

FROM: AMBASSADOR BUNKER SAIGON 0239 IMMEDIATE
TO: THE WHITE HOUSE, EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER

MENT IN SOUTH VIET-NAM WAS NOT DESTROYED", BUT THE "U.S. WAR OF AGGRESSION" WAS BROUGHT TO AN END, AND FAVORABLE CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN CREATED FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE "PUPPET GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH VIET-NAM." IN GUIDANCE DATED 21 OCTOBER, HANOI CLAIMS THAT THE U.S. HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THE NEED FOR A FORM OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENTS THAT WILL BE SIGNED. THE MOST RECENT COSVN GUIDANCE ALSO STATES THAT "OUR ARMY AND GOVERNMENT WILL REMAIN IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. THE CEASE-FIRE IN PLACE WILL BE VERY PROFITABLE TO US BECAUSE IT ALLOWS US TO MAINTAIN A TOOTH COMB OR LEOPARD SKIN POSTURE IN SOUTH VIET-NAM."

11. THERE IS THUS A SERIOUS DISCREPANCY BETWEEN OUR POSITION AS EXPLAINED TO THIEU BY OUR SIDE AND THE ALLEGED AMERICAN POSITION AS REFLECTED IN THE ENEMY'S DOCUMENTS. THE PROBLEM MAY BE PARTLY ONE OF LANGUAGE, BUT IT IS ALSO LIKELY THAT THERE IS A STRONG ELEMENT OF COMMUNIST DUPLICITY INVOLVED TO WHICH THIEU IS RESPONDING, AS ONE MIGHT EXPECT.

12. THIEU SAID THAT THE COMMUNISTS ARE TRICKY. IN READING THE HANOI BROADCASTS IN VIETNAMESE HE FINDS THINGS REPORTED ABOUT WHICH HE HAS NOT KNOWN. FORTUNATELY NO ONE HAS YET ASKED HIM ABOUT THESE MATTERS. THE HANOI BROADCASTS, FOR EXAMPLE, REPORT THAT YOU HAD SUGGESTED THREE DIFFERENT DATES FOR THE BOMBING AND MINING HALT, THE INITIALING OF THE DOCUMENTS, AND THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT. RADIO HANOI REPORTED THAT ON OCTOBER 9 WE HAD AGREED TO A BOMBING HALT ON THE 13TH, INITIALING IN HANOI ON THE 19TH AND THE SIGNING BY THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS ON THE 26TH. ON THE 11TH WE HAD PROPOSED POSTPONEMENT AND AGAIN ON THE 20TH.

13. THE HANOI BROADCAST ALSO MENTIONED MESSAGES OF PRESIDENT NIXON TO THE DRV, WELCOMING THE LATTER'S GOOD WILL; A MESSAGE ON OCTOBER 20 MENTIONING THERE WERE SOME POINTS STILL TO BE AGREED ON AND A MESSAGE ON OCTOBER 22 IN WHICH HANOI CLAIMS THAT THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE EXPLANATION GIVEN BY THE DRV. HANOI, THEREFORE, CONCLUDES THE TEXT HAS BEEN AGREED TO.

14. THIEU SAID THAT WHEN ASKED ABOUT THESE STATEMENTS, HE CLAIMS IGNORANCE AND REPLIES THAT QUESTIONS WILL HAVE TO BE REFERRED TO THE USG.

15. I SAID THAT NO MATTER WHAT HANOI SAYS, NO MATTER WHAT OUR PRESENT DIFFERENCES MAY BE, EFFORTS NOW TO TRY TO DEVELOP ALTERNATE PROPOSALS CAN ONLY HAVE THE CONSEQUENCE OF FORCING A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN US AND CAN ONLY SERVE HANOI'S PURPOSE. WE HAD JUST THEIR MORNING RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM TOKYO INFORMING US OF FONMIN OHIRA'S BRIEFING TO THE JAPANESE PRESS AT WHICH HE REPORTED THE GVN'S REQUEST TO CONVEY A MESSAGE TO THE USG CONCERNING THEIR VIEWS ON NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOP WITHDRAWAL AND A TRIPARTITE TYPE COALITION. AMBASSADOR PHUONG HAD TOLD ME YESTERDAY HE WAS STOPPING IN KUALA LUMPUR AND WE HAVE A REPORT THAT AMBASSADOR LAM WAS GOING TO SEE PRESIDENT MARCOS. I PRESUMED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THESE MEETINGS WAS TO TRY TO GENERATE SUPPORT FOR THE GVN'S VIEWS AND I FEARED THAT THIS WOULD CERTAINLY GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF AN ATTEMPT TO BRING PRESSURE ON THE USG. THIS, OF COURSE, WAS INADMISSIBLE.

16. THIEU SAID THERE WAS NO INTENTION ~~ION.REF~~ TRYING TO BRING PRESSURE ON US, BUT THAT HE SIMPLY WISHED TO EXPLAIN THEIR POSITION. I SAID THAT WHATEVER THE INTENTION MIGHT BE, IT WOULD CERTAINLY GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF AN EFFORT TO PRESSURE US AND IN ANY CASE WOULD SERVE TO MAKE PUBLIC THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN US. THIS COULD ONLY WORK TO THE DISADVANTAGE OF BOTH OF US. AS FRIENDS AND ALLIES, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PRESENT A SOLID FRONT TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE ENEMY AND ARGUE OUT OUR DIFFERENCES PRIVATELY AMONG OURSELVES.

17. I HOPE THAT MY TALK THIS MORNING MAY HAVE SUCCEEDED IN CALMING SOME OF THIEU'S APPREHENSIONS. IT SEEMS APPARENT THAT THE REFERENCE TO A "GOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE" IN THE VIETNAMESE TEXT HAS CAUSED MUCH WPPREHENSION HERE. IT IS SEEN AS THE CAMEL GETTING HIS NOSE UNDER THE TENT BEFORE GETTING ALL THE WAY IN, EVEN THOUGH, AS I POINTED OUT TO THIEU, THE ~~Y~~NCRC HAS NO GOVERNMENTAL FUNCTIONS. I SHALL CONTINUE TO SEE THIEU REGULARLY. I GAVE HIM ONLY THE FIRST PART OF THE GAME PLAN TODAY, BUT WILL FOLLOW THIS UP GRADUALLY, KEEPING IN MIND THE BALANCE MENTIONED IN PARAGRAPH 4, REFTEL.

18. WARM REGARDS.

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